

# tests show few lead problems

people tested, only eight showed blood lead levels of or greater, the threshold. Control and Prevention children.

hope the latest blood test neighborhood's long-standing on from the park.

didn't have as significant a," said Alameda County

area residents still are not k site is risk-free.

been allayed, but I still have Robert Alexander, a retired leads a neighborhood advi-

ected from people in 109

households in late August, were analyzed by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of the U.S. Public Health Service in Atlanta. The agency coordinated the community outreach and hiring of 20 local health professionals to collect the samples.

Families already have received their individual results and were instructed in how to interpret them. The children whose blood-lead levels were higher than the 10 parts lead per deciliter (3.38 fluid ounces) of blood were referred to Alameda County health agencies for further screening and medical care. None of the adults had high enough levels to warrant medical followup, officials said.

Lead poisoning affects 9 percent of the nation's children under age 5. Even at low levels, lead poisoning can cause lowered IQs, learning disabilities, hyperactivity and other behavior problems. Elevated lead levels can cause chronic fatigue, bone pain, mental retarda-

tion and more severe medical problems, including death.

In 1993, about 20 children out of 632 tested at Cox School, next door to the park, had elevated levels of lead in their blood.

The park was built in the late 1970s after the former battery factory buildings were torn down.

But not all the lead-contaminated soil was removed before grass and playground equipment were installed.

Neighbors suspected for years the park was contaminated and the city finally closed it in 1993 after arsenic from contaminated rock began leaching through cracks in the basketball courts, producing a yellowish, crystalline residue.

As part of a plan to rid the community of lead, the Environmental Protection Agency will unveil a grant program on Nov. 6 to help residents remove lead from their yards.

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Lead in Blood of Residents

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